



## **BAACS NOTES & COMMENTS**

### **6/26/2003 Public Meeting**



#### ***Introductions***

Brad Mettam – Opened the meeting with a description of how and why the study got initiated and what the goals are.

Julie Bear – Described why the County Board of Supervisors is supportive of such a study and the need for it.

Bob Kimball – Gave an overview of the development of the study's purpose, need, and goals. Also described the Local Transportation Commission support for the effort.

#### ***Description of Study Process***

The main segments of the two-year study process entail:

- Traffic study/ data collection
- Problem, constraints, and opportunities analysis (development of alternatives)
- Public review process
- Final analysis completion
- Public and special interest group involvement throughout

#### ***Description of Data Collection***

State Highway data collection entails:

- US 395 weigh-in-motion station south of Big Pine (counts and classifies) and other US 395 permanent count stations between Big Pine and Round Valley.
- US 6 permanent count station with classification capabilities.
- State Route 168 permanent count stations

County Road data collection entails:

- Selected Bishop Area arterial and arterial collector roads have had (temporary) directional volume counts done by Inyo County Road Department.

City Streets data collection entails:

- Caltrans temporary hose counts (Spring of 03) on selected arterial and arterial collector streets.

All location of counts are mapped and identified and will be used to develop a computer model of Bishop area circulation.

### ***Expected Results***

- The study will entail looking for near, mid, and long range solutions.
- Primarily looking for solutions to safety, congestion, and improved access; not necessarily new highway alignments.

### ***Public Participation Plan Input***

The strategies and methods to be used for outreach and public participation were solicited from those in attendance.

- People were interested in the data and would like it made available in understandable formats. Workshops are an idea to assist people in interpreting the data.
- Newspaper ads and articles pertaining to the study would be good.
- There should be a special mailing to the business owners downtown, in order to solicit participation.
- The subject of mass mailings to Bishop area residence was received well. Similarly contacting greater Inyo and Mono counties was also suggested. This would probably have to be done through media and not direct.
- Other venues/facilities were also suggested for holding meetings:
  - City Council Chambers
  - Senior Center
  - DWP Conference Room
  - Elks Lodge
  - Charley Brown Auditorium
- The times suggested for having these public meetings are 7- 9 p.m.
- The days suggested for having public meetings are Wednesday & Thursday (midweek).
- Other entities that should be included in the stakeholders list: Ambulance / Emergency Response entities and the Hospital. IMAH also wanted to be identified as an involved stakeholder.
- The idea of a Drop-in Center was well received. City Hall was also suggested, along with Chamber of Commerce and Library, as a location to have a drop-in center.

### ***Round Robin Discussion***

- Economic analysis should be a key factor to this study.
- It seems like we have had a shift from being congested with interregional traffic to being congested with local traffic.
- The community has to have some ideas to visualize. January or February of '04 would be a likely time to have a potential design/alternatives workshop with the public.
- A bypass is what people are afraid of, with potential for satellite development. If an alternate route did come about, satellite development would not occur with our unique land ownership situation, Caltrans encroachment and access control, and County zoning.
- Fast food and gas services could be negatively impacted with an alternate route.
- Trucks can be required to use an alternate route, but cars can not be restricted from using it.

### ***Comments Received from Cards (specific to the study)***

1. "Include Northern Inyo Hospital as an interested entity."
2. "Good start! Traffic volumes on 203 and 395 near Nevada Border and near Olancho would be helpful. Try not to let a few Bishop business' ruin it for all motorists."
3. "In regards to the bypass idea – why not make the bypass a voluntary one. The excess truck traffic is not local – they are trying to go further than Bishop. I think the local vehicles and food traffic will be safer with new and improved crosswalks too."
4. (Received via pre-prepared letter slipped into comment box)  
In summary of one and a half page letter: "Caltrans needs to pursue a by-pass coupled to better city street circulation. This is the best option for the citizens, businesses, and tourist industry of Bishop. It will foster a well-integrated community that is prepared to deal with the inevitable future expansion and population increases of the future."

### ***Comments Received after the meeting through the mail***

1. In summary of a one page letter (dated July 1, 2003): This Bishop area resident thought the first meeting was good and well conducted. The resident was involved in the development of a similar study conducted in the 1960's pertaining to an alternate Bishop route. The resident notes that at the time a vast majority of people were for a Bishop bypass, which was derailed by a handful of business owners and politics from Sacramento down. *It is suggested that a poll or vote be conducted to determine whether to bypass or not.* Business people seem to support a truck route only bypass. Some business people believe that a bypass would destroy the downtown business, but what they fail to mention is that up to a quarter of the businesses are already

closed down and vacant. *“The average citizen should have a say in the study determinations, it should not be left up to the councilmen and other politicians as it was in the past.”*

2. In summary of a one plus page letter (dated July 1, 2003): Consideration of three points: 1) Enhance and Promote Safe Bicycling: Would like to see “enhancing and promoting safe bicycling as a main goal of the study.” “The absence of direct or continuous north-south corridors and the mismatch of east-west streets necessitates circuitous routes involving many left/right turns on major streets.” Cycling should be adequately addressed in this study. 2) Need for City Planning as a part of the process: A third party professional city planning consultant should be brought into the process so that the future of the community does not rely solely on the input and limited experience (and fears) of the local residents or business owners. 3) Special Needs of business community: The business communities’ views and ideas should be considered, but all interests need to be balanced in this process. There are likely groups that will be poorly represented in the process, such as cyclists(including children), pedestrians, elderly, and Hispanic, yet they have a strong interest in making Bishop a safe, livable, attractive community.
3. In summary of a two page letter (dated June 29, 2003): Concerns addressing two items – Safety on Main St. and Improvement of businesses on Main St. Safety: The increase in traffic volumes and the elimination of some main street parking have made downtown more dangerous. There have been instances when “no parking” signs bordering the roadway have been wiped out by extralegal loads. Bishop High School campus has an open policy and no cafeteria, therefore students frequent downtown eating establishments on the eastside of the highway. There are a number of large trucks carrying hazardous cargo that go right through downtown, such as sodium cyanide, explosives A, B, and C, DOE high level fissile, and crude oil. Hammil Valley and Fish Lake Valley carrot trucks run over 5,000 legs a year through town. Trucks tear up the downtown asphalt and make it rut quickly. Bishop is not conducive or convenient for big trucks. Business: Getting the trucks and some of the traffic out of downtown would allow for certain revitalization measures to main street. At the “About Bishop Corridor 2000” meeting all of the downtown merchants in attendance were in favor of an alternate route to Main Street. The City Council was receptive to the same concept and the Bishop High School Board has enthusiastically endorsed the concept. If this had been done 25 years ago, we would be enjoying the rewards.